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EIU Surpasses \$50 Million Fundraising Goal More Than Two Years Early

Feb-20-2012

"EI&U: The Campaign for Eastern," the largest fundraising effort in Eastern Illinois University's history, has surpassed its \$50 million goal more than two years ahead of schedule.

A total of \$53.1 million has been secured, fitting for a campaign with the theme "Expect Greatness," which was publicly launched in October 2010 with a goal of raising \$50 million by July 2014.

"When we began the 'Expect Greatness' campaign, I fully believed we would reach our goal, not only because Eastern touches so many lives, but also because giving back is the Eastern way," said EIU President Bill Perry.

"What has been a pleasant surprise is the speed at which our supporters have responded to our call for assistance. The challenging economy has made charitable dollars more precious than ever, but our alumni and friends have proven that Eastern is a priority to them. We're very grateful."

Part of the campaign's success stemmed from a huge response to its "Fund for the Future" component, in which people commit planned gifts. The goal for this area was \$12 million, but \$19.4 million has been secured.

The campaign received an influx of support from many people who believe in the university's mission, with alumni chief among them, said Robert Martin, vice president for university advancement.

"The most meaningful part of reaching our goal in such an impressive manner is seeing that the Eastern experience meant so much to our alumni," Martin said. "We touched their lives in such significant ways that they were more than willing to invest their own funds in keeping Eastern's tradition of excellence alive for current and future students."

Faculty and staff donations were up in the past fiscal year as well, with the percentage of employees donating increasing 75 percent from the previous year. Seventeen departments and offices had 100 percent participation.

The contributions received will allow EIU to remain a first-class institution while keeping tuition affordable for students, Perry said.

The campaign focuses on four priorities: students (funding scholarships); faculty and staff (attracting and retaining world-class faculty, as well as supporting research, creative projects and service activities); capital improvements (including building a new science center, courtyard spaces and a Lantz Arena gateway); and programs (including developing centers that would focus on specific subjects, with possibilities such as autism, entrepreneurship and innovation, ethics, financial health, geographic information systems and remote sensing, humanities, student community service and wellness).

Martin expressed deep appreciation to the members of the "EI&U" campaign Steering Committee: Chairperson Julie (Humphrey) Nimmons of Litchfield; Timothy L. and Vickie (Krupp) Burke of Evanston; Max and Mary Cougill of Charleston; Judy A. Ethell of Chesterfield, Mo.; Bob Glover of Chicago; Robert A. Ingram of Durham, N.C.; Charles Keller of Effingham; Jeffrey P. Knezovich of Naperville; Herbert and Jane Lasky of Ashmore; Richard A. Lumpkin of Mattoon; Carl T. Mito of Arlington Heights; Tony Romo of Dallas, Texas; Paul L. Snyder of Oro Valley, Ariz.; and Charles W. Witters of Las Vegas, Nev.

For more information about the campaign, please contact Karla Watson, assistant vice president of university advancement, at kjwatson@eiu.edu or 217-581-3315, or visit the "EI&U: The Campaign for Eastern" website at www.iameiu.com.

